

REPORT

Of the Committee of Claims, in the case of Charles Minifie.

DECEMBER 19, 1823.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the table.

DECEMBER 30, 1823.

Committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the petition of Charles Minifie,

REPORT:

The petitioner states that in 1812, a law for his relief was passed by Congress, directing his account to be settled, and such payment to be made to him as was just and equitable. By virtue of this settlement he received \$ 3,192 96, as the balance of the principal then due to him. This sum, it is alleged, had been due from the 3d of December, 1803, but was not received till the 26th of September, 1812. He therefore prays Congress to pass an act allowing him interest on \$ 3,192 96, from the 3d of December, 1803, to the 26th of September, 1812, as aforesaid.

The Committee would remark that it has not been usual for the government to pay interest in cases like the present. Exceptions to this rule, no doubt, may be adduced, but they have been introduced for reasons applicable to each case, taken distinctly and separately, and such as do not, in the judgment of the Committee, apply to the case of the present petitioner; as a general rule, government is understood to be always ready to settle and pay off its accounts; if any delay occurs it is imputable rather to claimants themselves than to the government. In the case of the present petitioner the delay was certainly owing to himself, inasmuch as his account could not be settled till Congress passed a law in 1812, directing the settlement of it upon just and equitable principles. Such appear to be the facts from the statement exhibited to the Committee, and it would, in their opinion, be a perversion of all the rules with which they have been acquainted to allow him now to demand a benefit from the consequences of his own delay. The following resolution is therefore submitted:

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioner ought not to be granted.

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